

THE Teacher's World

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THE WEEK'S MESSAGE—No. 125.

From MISS CHARLOTTE M. MASON, Founder of the Parents' National Educational Union.



DO not know any more encouraging sign of the times than the increasing uneasiness of teachers. The results obtained are very pleasing, but the means are not satisfied.

Just now the uneasiness is accentuated because schools are under high pressure to become vocational rather than educational. Not that the matter is ever put in the field; on the contrary, people say, "The children give ordered exercise to the senses; this is the work of the children. When they are older, they will be able to take on the work of the mind." By the time they have reached the age of 16, they will have learnt to practice a trade, and society will be relieved of the burden of the inefficient and incapable.

This is vocational training, an easy and pleasant path, a gradual descent, very tempting to teachers because it offers rest, comfort and peace, and lightly won success. The children like it, the teachers enjoy it, educational authorities are naturally interested, why in the world should teachers not be satisfied? Their method, in a broad way, with every inducement to follow it. This system of vocational training is in all good faith called education, although every one knows where spiritual (or intellectual) effort has to be made to overcome the weaknesses of the movement. The method is that children learn by doing, and that therefore vocational training is the same thing as education. Now, all that children learn by doing is to do the thing they are at work upon. All the thoughts they get in doing are concerned with the carrying out, or working of the thing in hand. They get the training proper to the matter of an art—but that they even learn to work as perfectly—while the glorious possibilities proper to a man are hindered and choked in the child, to find unlawful outlets, if any, in the days to come.

Now this is the sort of thing children think about and talk about. A class of small persons aged nine or ten were read-

ing Shakespeare's "King John." One child whispers to another, "But Constance was a very great lady, you should read her part with more 'reverence'." or, again, a small boy of six means to have an exhibition of his pictures, and draws up a catalogue. This is the description of "a giant in red." "This giant is inside out." He lives usually in a mine, and perhaps, and the black spider was seen in the picture, and the centre and hole of all



the people he has eaten." A little girl of six little brother to put in the picture of Mary Queen of Scots "to comfort her in prison" and Mary says, "Thank you, that is what I have been waiting for for years." But every teacher has a stock of stories showing how children run mad and imagine, and to kill all that, strikes a thoughtful person as a sort of smothering of the Princes in the Tower.

The fact is, children require knowledge, as they require food, and, absolutely necessary as is the teaching of science, it is still true that "The proper knowledge for mankind is man," a knowledge to be got out of history, poetry, tales,

travel-books—re-written that they are literature: "Salad the Saker," "Waverley," "Robinson Crusoe," and, may I add, the history of Joseph, the travels of St. Paul, and the Gospel narratives (whose wonderful beauty we lose sight of because their vital importance is so great). Give children living books, the best we have, with little teaching, but with the inspiring sympathy and direction of an educated mind, and they grow naturally become persons of wide and understanding hearts, with many intellectual resources. They are educated for their own lives, and not merely for the advantage of society.

On the other hand, parents who fix out for vocational training and who say that boys and girls should leave a good trade to go on with useful work in the world have truth on their side. The fact is that the school has two functions—educational and vocational—and neither supersedes nor overlaps the other. The due and daily nourishing of the mind and the opening up of many interests belong to the former, while the capacity due and necessary training of hand and eye, sense and muscle given to the point of preparatory work in a given calling belong to the latter.

A good many teachers, faced with this, are beginning to look to the Parents' Union for help in adjusting these contrary claims. The philosophy of education by which our practice has been guided for the last quarter of a century or more is comprehensive. But perhaps the two outstanding principles are that education is of the spirit, not of the flesh; is principle lately enunciated with great effect by Lord Haldane; and next, that learning and not teaching, is the business of the schools. Let teachers believe that knowledge is the sole concern of education, that knowledge is life, and that the knowledge of God is eternal life, and education will advance by leaps and bounds, for something will develop, and the children we bring up will be, as we would have them, greater and better than ourselves.

Charlotte M. Mason

THE WEEK'S CAUSERIE

NEWS—EVENTS—COMMENTS.



Mr. Spurlay Hey, B.A. who has just been appointed Director of Education for Manchester.

Mr. Hey's appointment as Director of Education for Manchester will give universal satisfaction.

His career has been one of uninterrupted advance from the day when, as a pupil teacher, he was first upon the lowest rung of the educational ladder. After two years' training at St. John's College, York, Mr. Hey spent seven years as an assistant-master in Sheffield and Rotherham Schools. Following upon a year as reader at Sheffield University College and Sheffield Technical School, Mr. Hey took his B.A. degree at the University of London. From 1903 he has been in possession of Elementary School and Supervision of the Training of Pupil Teachers at Rotherham. In 1907 he was appointed Director of Education at Rotherham, and four years later secured a similar position at the U.S. of Scotland. Many of our readers will remember the characteristic Message of the Week of 1910. Mr. Hey contributed to THE TEACHER'S WORLD many two years ago. Our readers will join with us in wishing Mr. Hey a long and successful career which has distinguished his name. His continuing address at Manchester is 12, Elm St., 1914.

The Founder of the P.N.E.U.

Miss Charlotte M. Mason, whose Memorials to education appear in this issue, has most kindled educational views, and especially, and in a gentle way which has influenced, and is still influencing, the thought of all cultured men and women. We may not be able to agree with everything she says, but we claim to be a respectful hearing from all interested in the well-being of their country in regard to education. As the founder of the Parents' National Educational Union, Miss Mason has been responsible for a movement which is having far-reaching results, and which has more public attention than it deserves.

On page 512 of this issue appears an article describing the objects and principles of the P.N.E.U., the eighteenth Annual Conference of which will be held at the Mechanics' Institute, Dorking, next week, March 9 to March 14. The Conference will be welcomed by Mr. A. J.

Francis, and among the speakers will be Dr. Norman, (the "Lancet") Dr. L. T. Sanjour, M.A. and Mr. Kenneth Tooke, and Mr. Mason herself will preside at the discussion, the usual subject being "The Education of the Poor." The Chair at the evening session will be taken by Mr. H. P. Pease, M.P.

Peace in Herefordshire.

We congratulate the Herefordshire Authorities and the teachers of the county on the peaceful termination of the recent unhappy strike. The scale of salaries which the Authority has granted, while being in no sense extravagant, will remove the constant friction which for years has existed against educational efficiency.

THE RIDER

The door of my heart is open—
And you in the forest night!
Will you greet me, and pause a moment,
Or will you go riding by?

The door of my heart is open
There's a rose on the window sill
And the mignonette of remembrance
Is heavy with sweetness still!

Alas! you have not forgotten
The day in the dim, grey past
When you called with jesting words
And— I bolted the door too fast!

Now I wait in a thousand heart
I wait for your coming, my love
I wait for your coming, my love
I wait for your coming, my love

And I may have been out of love
But I thought this you once drew
And my heart beat true in the old days
I never may hear again!

The door of my heart is open
And he, through the forest night,
Comes riding, riding, riding—
Ah, God! will he pass me by?

MARION MILLER KNIGHT.

in Herefordshire. The cause for the dispute is certainly bright, and we may predict with confidence that the Herefordshire ratepayers will, in time, if not at once, recognize that the financial outlay of public money was well worth while.

The "Half-Time" Bill.

The Children, Employment, and School Attendance Bill, of which the House of Commons has given a second reading, may, it is reasonable to hope, become law this session. Its main provisions are—

1. No child to be exempt from school attendance above the age of 14, and present exemption above that age to be restricted.

2. Local Education Authorities to have the option of raising the leaving age for children up to the age of 16 instead of 14, as at present.

3. The present half-time system to be abolished, and street trading to be restricted.

The abolition of the half-time system is long sought for by educationists, and will be effected without unduly hindering hard work by the pro-

ponents of the Bill, and a general lowering of the half-time system. We can imagine, too, that it is reasonable to suppose that the House of Commons will support the Bill, which is now in the hands of the Committee of the House of Commons, and is expected to be the subject of a debate in the House of Commons in the near future. The House of Commons is expected to be the subject of a debate in the House of Commons in the near future. The House of Commons is expected to be the subject of a debate in the House of Commons in the near future.

The Montessori Method in London.

We report the decision of the Local Education Committee to take no further steps to introduce the Montessori Method, and the inability of the elementary school. No one expected them to welcome it with open arms, and immediately infer the adoption of its principles by the infant schools of the metropolis. But with the committee at their disposal the Committee might surely have sanctioned the opening of an experimental school, especially in the other directions they have shown a ready-willingness to consider new educational developments.

The decision is intensely disappointing. Mr. Hatkinson, the head teacher of one of the Council's own infant schools, reported his enthusiastic approval of the Montessori system after a four months' course of training in Rome, and it seems strange that after authorizing the expenditure of time and money the Committee should not even propose to visit Mr. Hatkinson's report.

Superstition in Education.

The report of the Department of Education, published last week, contains a number of statements which are of interest to the Department. The report of the Department of Education, published last week, contains a number of statements which are of interest to the Department. The report of the Department of Education, published last week, contains a number of statements which are of interest to the Department.

Even Mr. Pease admitted that the Department have taken a rather prejudiced point of view in dealing with the question of superstition. As a result of their report, we may look forward to an early decision by the Departmental Committee on the question of whether or not superstition is a hindrance to education.

Two Prize Competitions.

The Education Office has announced that a variable School Programme for St. George's Day, and another of the same subject for a variable School Programme for Lupine Day. The reader may enter his school or club in these competitions. Papers must reach the Education Office on or before March 18, and the entries must be endorsed "St. George's Day" or "Lupine Day" as the case may be.

The prizes will go to the most original efforts, and those which make the most successful distinction between the two selections; that is, St. George's Day Programme should not be an abridgement of the one for Lupine Day.

Those of our readers who have original suggestions, and who are desirous of giving their suggestions a chance of being published in THE TEACHER'S WORLD, will be glad to know that the Education Office has announced that a variable School Programme for St. George's Day, and another of the same subject for a variable School Programme for Lupine Day.

KNOWLEDGE TOUCHED WITH EMOTION

MISS CHARLOTTE MASON AND THE PARENTS' NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL UNION.



To adapt Matthew Arnold's phrase concerning religion, education should aim at giving knowledge "touched with emotion." Friedrich Breuer has a charming episode in her novel, "Neighbours," where two schoolgirls fight a duel on behalf of their several heroes, Charles XII and Peter the Great. The children of today fight on such duels. They do not care for heroes, they care for artists. Knowledge for them is not "touched with emotion," unless it be the emotions of personal acquisitiveness and emulation. Boys and girls have it in them to be generous and enthusiastic. If they leave school without interests beyond that of preparing for further examinations, or the absorbing interests of games, if they are intellectually desiccated, ought we to blame them, or the methods by which they have been taught?

Here in a nutshell, if the reader is discerning enough, is much of Miss Mason's educational philosophy. To her and those who work with her to be a child "is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear . . . for each child has its fairy godmother in its own soul."

It is
"as if a world in a grain of sand,
And a heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
And eternity in an hour."

"Anusad Drops" of Knowledge.

The chief need of the child is Knowledge. "Breathing in mind that information does not become Knowledge until it has been acted upon by the mind of the recipient." And this right kind of Knowledge, Miss Mason maintains, is denied the child in our schools of to-day—denied him not by any fault of the teacher, but by the vicious system which has caught him in its toils. "Before the era of free meals," wrote Miss Mason, in a letter to the *Times*, "I heard of a little girl in East London whose mother gave her a penny to buy dinner for herself and her little sister, when the two set out for school. The child confided to her teacher that a 'hop' of 'anusad drops' 'stays your stomach' more than a halfpenny bun. Now, our schools are asked more or less upon anusad drops, marks, prizes, scholarships, blue ribbons, all of which 'stay the stomach' of the boy who does not get the knowledge that he needs. That is the point. He needs knowledge as much as he needs bread and milk; his appetite for knowledge is as healthy as his appetite for his dinner; and an abundant regular supply of what intervals of various knowledge is a constitutional necessity for the growing pupil as well as for the curious child; and yet we may find his hunger pangs upon 'anusad drops'."

What Education Should Be.

How this rare and perfect Knowledge may be acquired by the child Miss Mason thus explains: "Education, we think, should be by Things and by Books. Ten years ago education by Things was little thought of except in the games of public schools. Today a great reform has taken place, and the modern education by Things is recognized everywhere. Disciplined

children, artistic handicrafts, are seen to make for education as truly as do geography and Latin. "Nature study" has come in later, but has come with a rush. The teaching of science is receiving enormous attention. Here and there, works of art are allowed their chance with boys and girls, and we shall look more and more to this means of education. In these matters also, the Parents' National Educational Union has done some pioneer work, and has laboured at education by Things."

"The great educational failure we have skill to deal with is in the matter of books. We know that books store the knowledge and thought of the World; but the mass of knowledge, the multitude of books, overpower us, and we think we may select here and there; from this book and that, fragments and facts of knowledge, to be dealt out, whether by the little class book or the oral lessons."

The Virtue of Books.

It is to books that Miss Mason largely pins her faith—*real* books, the products of great

THE WONDER OF THE WORLD.

"I think that is very wonderful," a little girl wrote in an examination paper after trying to explain why a leaf is green. That little girl had found the principle—admiration, wonder—which makes science vital, and without wonder her highest value is, not spiritual, but suburban. A man might as well collect matchboxes, like those charming people in one of Anatole France's novels, as search for diatoma, unless the wonder of the world be ever fresh before his eyes.

—MISS CHARLOTTE M. MASON.

minds given or read to the children as they left their authors, not borrowed, absorbed, and robbed of their virtue by the despot's hand. The child children should read them, the younger ones should hear them read, and orally reproduce their substance. A child is "a born poet," and we have no right to belittle his powers and try to "come down" to his level.

But Miss Mason must be read to be understood fully. There is the organ of the P.N.E.U., "The Parents' Review" (ed. monthly), "Some Suggestions to the School Curriculum of Girls and Boys under 14" (1911), "The Annual Report of the Parents' National Educational Union," and "The Basis of National Strength" (1912), a series of letters by Miss Mason to the *Times*, all of which may be obtained through the P.N.E.U. Office, 26, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

The P.N.E.U.

It was in order that these principles for which she stands should be capable of execution and be given practical form, that Miss Mason founded the Parents' National Educational Union. Its president are the Earl and Countess of Aberdeen, and among the vice-presidents are the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Countess of Minto, and the Earl of Lytton.

while Earl Beauchamp is the chairman of the executive committee. The objects of the Union (which insists on a religious basis of education) are: (a) To assist parents of all classes to understand the best principles and methods of education in all its aspects, and especially in those which concern the formation of habits and character. (b) To create a better public opinion on the subject of the training of children, and with this object in view to collect and make known the best information and experience on the subject. (c) To afford parents opportunities for co-operation and consultation, so that the wisdom and experience of each may be profitable to all. (d) To stimulate their enthusiasm, through the sympathy of numbers acting together. (e) To secure greater unity and continuity of education, by harmonising home and school training.

The Work of the Union.

These objects are being attained by the work carried on at Ambleton in the House of Education, where Miss Mason superintends the training of teachers who become primary and secondary governesses in families; by the Parents' Union School, which helps parents whose children are taught at home; by superintending, and checking by examination, the results of the work of parents or governesses; and in other ways giving the children some of the advantages of the corporate life of school; and by lectures, conferences, and publications which spread the spirit of knowledge, which is Miss Mason's life, devotedly expounded.

Not only children taught at home, but whole schools which are willing to follow Miss Mason's lead are admitted to the Parents' Union School, and magnificent work is being accomplished not only in the British Isles, but in faraway Australia, Ceylon, and South Africa.

So far the influence of the Parents' National Educational Union has been confined to the children of the upper and professional classes. But Miss Mason understands the elementary school, and has strong hopes that some day the principles of the P.N.E.U. may be embraced in their curriculum, and that even in the classroom of an elementary school we may see "go, feeding blue men," for example, on Mazzini's "The Duties of Man," a volume of Hakiyev, or Seely's "Expansion of England."

"My Mind a Kingdom."

We can assure Miss Mason that the curriculum and methods of the elementary school are slowly broadening in the way she desires. As she truly says:

"A great deal of mechanical labour is necessarily performed in educating the mind, the farm labourer cannot think all the time of the black he is ploughing, the fatter he is ploughing how good that he should be figuring to himself the trial scene in the 'Heart of Midlothian,' the 'High jinks' in 'Guy Raverney,' and his imagination should be playing with Anne Page of Mrs. Quickly, so that his labour goes the better. 'I know his secret, and a holy strain repeats.' People, working people, do their things. Many a man can say out of a rich experience, 'My mind to me a kingdom is,' many a man cries with Browning's 'Paracelsus,' 'God! 'Then art mind! 'Till the water-closet! Mind shall be province. Stay my mind long!'"

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